

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 12421 192214Z

71

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

DOE-00 FBIE-00 SY-05 JUSE-00 MCT-01 ACDA-07 EB-07

SCA-01 /078 W

----- 130509

P 192102Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5249

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 12421

PASS FBI HEADQUARTERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ASEC, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELA COVERAGE OF CUBANA CRASH AFTERMATH

REFS: CARACAS 12377 (NOTALL), STATE 257273 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY MORNING PRESS OCTOBER 19 CARRIES AP STORY FROM PORT OF SPAIN QUOTING BURNHAM TO EFFECT THAT LUGO AND LOZANO WERE FRIENDS OF THE CIA AND JOE LEO'S NAME APPEARED IN DIARY OF ONE OF THESE TWO.

STORY NOTED FURTHER THAT LEO WAS FBI AGENT AND WORKED IN CARACAS EMBASSY AS LEGAL ATTACHE. OTHER MAJOR THEMES IN LOCAL PRESS HAVE EMPHASIZED BOSCH'S ALLEGED CONNECTION NOT ONLY TO DC-8 BOMBING, BUT ALSO TO ASSASSINATION OF ORLANDO LETELIER. OTHER SUBJECTS HAVE BEEN ROLE OF EX-DISIP OFFICIAL POSADA IN PLANNING TERRORIST ACTS, AND FACT THAT DISIP HAS NOW ARRESTED 14 SUSPECTS AND INTERVIEWED OVER 30 PERSONS

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PAGE 02 CARACA 12421 192214Z

CONCERNING TERRORIST OPERATIONS PLANNED IN VENEZUELA AGAINST

TARGETS IN VENEZUELA AS WELL AS IN THE U.S., BARBADOS, TRINIDAD, GUYANA, COLOMBIA AND PANAMA. FINALLY, POLICE CLAIM TO HAVE TWENTY PIECES OF EVIDENCE LINKING VENEZUELAN RESIDENTS AND OTHERS DIRECTLY TO CUBANA CRASH. END SUMMARY.

1. BOTH MAJOR MORNING DAILIES OCTOBER 19 CARRIED FULL AP STORY FROM TRINIDAD QUOTING PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM TO EFFECT THAT LUGO AND LOZANO (THE TWO VENEZUELAN NOW UNDER ARREST IN TRINIDAD)

WERE "FRIENDS OF CIA" AND THAT IN ONE OF SUSPECTS'S DIARY THE NAME OF JOE LEO, AN FBI AGENT WHO WAS WORKING AS THE LEGAL ATTACHE AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN CARACAS, APPEARS.

2. SINCE ARREST OF ORLANDO BOSCH LAST WEEK, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR SECURITY SERVICE (DISIP) OFFICIALS HAVE NOW ROUNDED 14 PERSONS, SEVERAL OF CUBAN ORIGIN, FOR COMPLICITY IN THE CUBANA AIRLINE BOMBING. DISIP HAS ALSO TOLD PRESS THAT TWENTY PIECES OF EVIDENCE HAVE BEEN FOUND IN CARACAS WHICH LEAD TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE BOMBING OF THE AIRCRAFT WAS PLANNED HERE. STORIES BASED ON DISIP SOURCES ALSO NOTE THAT DISIP HAS NOW INTERVIEWED OVER 30 CUBAN EXILES CONCERNING PLANNED TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. IN ADDITION, A PRINCIPAL THEME HAS CENTERED ON SPECULATION THAT ANTI-CUBAN EXILES, INCLUDING BOSCH, MAY HAVE PLANNED THE ASSASSINATION OF ORLANDO LETELIER ALTHOUGH NO EVIDENCE HAS BEEN ADDUCED TO SUPPORT THIS ASSERTION. RELATED THEMES HAVE EMPHASIZED ANTI-CASTRO CUBAN EXILES TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN VENEZUELA INCLUDING PLANNING OF ATTACH ON GUYANESE CONSULATE GENERAL IN TRINIDAD, AND PLANNED ATTACKS ON TARGETS IN VENEZUELA, BARBADOS, TRINIDAD, COLOMBIA, PANAMA AND U.S.

3. SEPARATE STORIES HAVE FOCUSED ON ARREST OF ORLANDO BOSCH, WHO IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT HE DOES NOT FEAR RETURN TO THE U.S., BUT DOES NOT WANT TO BE DEPORTED TO CUBA. THEY ALSO SPECULATE THAT BOSCH HAS BEEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THE LETELIER ASSASSINATION AS WELL AS CUBANA BOMBING. PAPERS REPORT FURTHER THAT BOSCH HAS EXPLAINED TO POLICE HOW HE OBTAINED A FALSE COSTA RICAN PASSPORT TO ENTER VENEZUELA TWO YEARS AGO. OTHER THEME STRUCK IS INTEREST THAT U.S. HAS IN CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CARACA 12421 192214Z

SEEKING RETURN OF BOSCH, BASED PRINCIPALLY ON DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENTS, ALTHOUGH ORIGINAL STORIES ON SUBJECT SUGGESTED THAT U.S. WISHED TO EXTRADITE BOSCH.

4. FINALLY, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION IN PRESS AND TV ABOUT LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS OF BOMBING INCIDENT WHICH INVOLVE AT LEAST FIVE COUNTRIES. THERE IS NO CONSENSUS AS YET AS TO WHO MIGHT BE EXTRADITED OR WHAT COUNTRY MIGHT

SEEK TO TRY THOSE INVOLVED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOMBING, INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, INVESTIGATIONS, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CARACA12421
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760392-0772
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761039/aaaabhad.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 CARACAS 12377, 76 STATE 257273
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <27 OCT 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VENEZUELA COVERAGE OF CUBANA CRASH AFTERMATH
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ASEC, VE, FBI, (LEO, JOSEPH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006